

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 04797 111518Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2490
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4797

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, SREF, LE, IS
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON - STATUS OF REFUGEES

1. DURING OUR APRIL 10 MEETING WITH WEIZMAN CONCERNING THE IDF WITHDRAWAL PLANS FROM SOUTH LEBANON (SEPTTEL), COL. WILLIAMS ASKED WIEZMAN HOW THE REFUGEE RETURN WAS GOING. WEIZMAN INDICATED SATISFACTION WITH THE SITUATION SAYING THAT ABOUT 55,000 HAD RETURNED TO DATE AND THE RATE WAS CONTINUING AT ABOUT 1,000 A DAY. HE STATED, AND HIS AIDE CONFIRMED, THAT NO GREAT PROBLEMS WERE BEING EXPERIENCED IN HANDLING THE RETURN.

2. COMMENT: ASSUMING WEIZMAN'S FIGURES ARE CORRECT HIS REPORT IS ENCOURAGING. HOWEVER, AS IS THE CASE WITH EVERYTHING CONCERNING SOUTH LEBANON THESE DAYS, WE MUST ISSUE A WORD OF CAUTION. WE HAVE ALREADY
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HEARD COMPLAINTS FROM CHIEF OF STAFF GUR TO THE EFFECT THAT THE UN FORCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON IS NOT EQUIPPED TO HANDLE REFUGEE SUPPORT. FOR EXAMPLE, HE TOLD WILLIAMS THE UN HAD INFORMED THE IDF MEDICAL CORPS IT WOULD BE AT LEAST TWO MONTHS BEFORE THE UN WOULD BE CAPABLE OF HANDLING MEDICAL SUPPORT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. ALTHOUGH THIS EXAMPLE HAS NOT YET BEEN RAISED AS A

PROBLEM AFFECTING IDF WITHDRAWAL, CONSIDERATION OF
THIS TYPE OF COMPLICATING FACTOR MUST BE MADE PART OF
THE UN EQUATION. WE WOULD APPRECIATE COMMENTS FROM
USUN AND AMCONSUL JERUSALEM ON UN PLANS, IF ANY, REGARDING
THE REFUGEE SUPPORT PROBLEM
LEWIS

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